(b) whether the said process also helps in producing 25 to 30 times more power; and

(c) whether Government have any plan to make use of such process and if so, by when ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY (SHRIMATI VASUNDHRA RAJE) : (a) Yes, Sir, the Government is aware that a number of technologies have been and are being developed to process nuclear waste, both in India and abroad.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Chinese Claim over Sikkim

2942. SHRI DAWA LAMA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Chinese Government is staking claims over Sikkim; and

(b) if so, the reactions of Government thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) and (b) Chinese official maps continue to depict Sikkim as a separate territory outside India. The official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, launched on January 1,2000, refers to Sikkim as a separate territory and states that "the Chinese Government does not recognise India's illegal annexation of Sikkim".

We have taken up with the Chinese side the issue of their incorrect depiction of Sikkim. We have pointed out that their position on Sikkim, an issue related to India's sovereignty and territorial integrity, is not in conformity with their own stated objective of seeking goodwill and friendship with India. It is not in conformity with the principles of Panchsheel. It gives rise to misgivings in the minds of Indian people, Parliament and government and adversely affects the process of building trust and confidence. We have also conveyed to the Chinese side that we expect them to acknowledge the reality of Sikkim as an integral part of India. This would help promote development of friendly, co-operative, good-neighbourly and mutually beneficial relationship between the two sides.